



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Employment Commission

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The Virginia unemployment rate fell to 5.3 percent in October while total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 34,000

— The recent changes in these measures reflect the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and efforts to contain it. —

RICHMOND— Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate declined 0.9 of a percentage point in October to 5.3 percent, which is 2.6 percentage points above the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in October, the labor force fell by 15,589, or 0.4 percent, to 4,276,695, as the number of unemployed residents declined by 40,454. The number of employed residents increased by 24,865 to 4,049,466. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate, which fell to 6.9 percent.

Virginia nonagricultural wage and salary employment, from the monthly establishment survey, rose by 34,000 jobs in October to 3,898,800. September's preliminary estimate was revised upward by 7,700, adding to that month's job gains. In October, private sector employment increased by 36,700 jobs to 3,192,400, while public sector payrolls decreased by 2,700 jobs to 706,400.

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Employment rose in eight of eleven major industry sectors, was unchanged in one, and declined in two. The largest job gain during October occurred in **leisure and hospitality** with an increase of 13,300 jobs to 346,200. The second largest increase occurred in **trade and transportation** (+8,400 jobs) to 653,900. Other increases included **professional and business services** (+7,600 jobs) to 750,000, **education and health services** (+3,300 jobs) to 523,200, **construction** (+3,100 jobs) to 210,700, **miscellaneous** (+1,200 jobs) to 195,600, **manufacturing** (+1,100 jobs) to 229,500, and **information** (+100 jobs) to 65,900. **Mining** was unchanged at 7,100 jobs over the month. The largest decrease occurred in **government** (-2,700 jobs) to 706,400. The decreases occurred in federal government (-3,600 jobs) and local government (-3,000 jobs), while state government employment rose from September (+3,900 jobs). **Finance** employment fell by 1,400 jobs to 210,300 over the month.

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Industry	Employment			September 2020 to October 2020		October 2019 to October 2020	
	October 2020	September 2020	October 2019	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	3,898,800	3,864,800	4,063,600	34,000	0.9%	-164,800	-4.1%
Total Private Sector	3,192,400	3,155,700	3,330,100	36,700	1.2%	-137,700	-4.1%
Goods-Producing	447,300	443,100	451,400	4,200	0.9%	-4,100	-0.9%
Mining	7,100	7,100	7,800	0	0.0%	-700	-9.0%
Construction	210,700	207,600	203,800	3,100	1.5%	6,900	3.4%
Manufacturing	229,500	228,400	239,800	1,100	0.5%	-10,300	-4.3%
Service-Providing	3,451,500	3,421,700	3,612,200	29,800	0.9%	-160,700	-4.4%
Private Service-Providing	2,745,100	2,712,600	2,878,700	32,500	1.2%	-133,600	-4.6%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	653,900	645,500	657,400	8,400	1.3%	-3,500	-0.5%
Information	65,900	65,800	68,900	100	0.2%	-3,000	-4.4%
Finance	210,300	211,700	211,400	-1,400	-0.7%	-1,100	-0.5%
Professional and Business Services	750,000	742,400	767,900	7,600	1.0%	-17,900	-2.3%
Education and Health Services	523,200	519,900	558,000	3,300	0.6%	-34,800	-6.2%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	346,200	332,900	412,300	13,300	4.0%	-66,100	-16.0%
Miscellaneous Services	195,600	194,400	202,800	1,200	0.6%	-7,200	-3.6%
Government	706,400	709,100	733,500	-2,700	-0.4%	-27,100	-3.7%
Federal Government	188,500	192,100	182,300	-3,600	-1.9%	6,200	3.4%
State Government	152,200	148,300	162,200	3,900	2.6%	-10,000	-6.2%
Local Government	365,700	368,700	389,000	-3,000	-0.8%	-23,300	-6.0%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

From October 2019 to October 2020, the VEC estimates that establishments in Virginia lost 164,800 jobs, a decrease of 4.1%. In October, the private sector recorded an over-the-year loss of 137,700 jobs, while employment in the public sector lost 27,100 jobs.

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Compared to a year ago, on a **seasonally adjusted** basis, ten out of eleven major industry divisions experienced employment declines. The largest over-the-year job loss occurred in **leisure and hospitality**, down 66,100 jobs (-16.0%). The next largest over-the-year job loss occurred in **education and health services**, down 34,800 jobs (-6.2%). **Government** experienced the third largest over-the-year job loss of 27,100 jobs (-3.7%). Within government, there were decreases in local government employment (-23,300 jobs) and state government employment (-10,000 jobs). Federal government experienced an increase in employment (+6,200 jobs). **Professional and business services** employment declined by 17,900 (-2.3%). **Manufacturing** lost 10,300 jobs (-4.3%) while **miscellaneous** shed 7,200 jobs (-3.6%). Other losses were in **trade and transportation**, down 3,500 jobs (-0.5%); **information**, down 3,000 jobs (-4.4%); **finance**, down 1,100 jobs (-0.5%); and **mining** down 700 jobs (-9.0%). The sole increase occurred in **construction**, up 6,900 jobs (+3.4%).

Total Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Area	Employment			September 2020 to October 2020		October 2019 to October 2020	
	October 2020	September 2020	October 2019	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Virginia	3,898,800	3,864,800	4,063,600	34,000	0.9%	-164,800	-4.1%
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA	73,600	73,500	74,100	100	0.1%	-500	-0.7%
Charlottesville MSA	117,000	115,300	121,700	1,700	1.5%	-4,700	-3.9%
Harrisonburg MSA	65,600	65,800	69,800	-200	-0.3%	-4,200	-6.0%
Lynchburg MSA	99,000	97,400	106,300	1,600	1.6%	-7,300	-6.9%
Northern Virginia MSA	1,462,600	1,454,500	1,527,200	8,100	0.6%	-64,600	-4.2%
Richmond MSA	656,000	654,500	685,600	1,500	0.2%	-29,600	-4.3%
Roanoke MSA	155,000	154,400	161,600	600	0.4%	-6,600	-4.1%
Staunton-Waynesboro MSA	52,900	52,000	52,000	900	1.7%	900	1.7%
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina MSA	772,500	756,700	793,600	15,800	2.1%	-21,100	-2.7%
Winchester, Virginia/West Virginia MSA	61,400	60,600	66,200	800	1.3%	-4,800	-7.3%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In October, nine metropolitan areas experienced over-the-month job gains while one experienced losses over-the-month. The largest absolute job increase occurred in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (+15,800 jobs). The next largest absolute job gain occurred in Northern Virginia (+8,100 jobs), followed by Charlottesville (+1,700 jobs). Other increases include Lynchburg (+1,600 jobs), Richmond (+1,500 jobs), Staunton-Waynesboro (+900 jobs), Winchester (+800 jobs), Roanoke (+600 jobs), and Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (+100 jobs). The sole monthly employment decline occurred in Harrisonburg (-200 jobs).

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Over the year, **seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment decreased in nine of the ten metropolitan areas. The Northern Virginia metropolitan area experienced the largest absolute job loss, down 64,600 jobs (-4.2%). Richmond ranked second, with a loss of 29,600 jobs (-4.3%). Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News ranked third with a decline of 21,100 jobs (-2.7%). Other over-the-year job losses occurred in Lynchburg (-7,300 jobs), Roanoke (-6,600 jobs), Winchester (-4,800 jobs), Charlottesville (-4,700 jobs), Harrisonburg (-4,200 jobs), and Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (-500 jobs). Staunton-Waynesboro added 900 jobs and was the only metropolitan area with a positive change over the year.

NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

Virginia's **unadjusted** unemployment rate decreased 1.0 percentage point in October to 5.1 percent, but was up 2.6 percentage points from a year ago. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed increased by 106,325, household employment decreased by 273,784, and the labor force decreased by 167,459. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national unadjusted rate, which fell by 1.1 percentage points in October to 6.6 percent.

Compared to last month, the October **unadjusted** workweek for Virginia's 153,800 manufacturing production workers increased by 0.7 hours to 40.2 hours. Average hourly earnings of private-sector production workers increased by \$.26 to \$20.70 in October and average weekly earnings rose \$24.76 to \$832.14.

Technical note: Estimates of unemployment and industry employment levels are obtained from two separate monthly surveys. Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the Virginia portion of the national Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey conducted each month by the U.S. Census Bureau under contract with BLS, which provides input to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program (often referred to as the "household" survey). Industry employment data is mainly derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, a monthly survey of approximately 18,000 Virginia businesses conducted by BLS, which provides estimates of employment, hours, and earnings data broken down by industry for the nation as a whole, all states and most major metropolitan areas (often referred to as the "establishment" survey). Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by the BLS. **For national figures and information on how COVID-19 affected collection of the BLS establishment and household surveys in September, refer to the BLS [October 2020 Employment Situation](#) press release for details.**

The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of October 11-17, 2020.

The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the October local area unemployment rates on Thursday, December 3, 2020. The data will be available on our website www.VirginiaWorks.com.

The November statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Friday, December 18, 2020.